0.47 per cent in 2005-06, whereas the private investment as a per centage of GDP has shown a decline from 1.75 per cent in 2002-03 to 1.45 per cent in the year 2005-06.

(c) According to the latest estimates released by Central Statistical Organisation (CSO), the public investment in agriculture mainly through irrigation works (major, medium and minor irrigation schemes) stands at Rs. 13219 crore in 2005-06 as against Rs. 10267 crore in 2004-05 at 1999-2000 prices.

Mini Mission-II of Technology Mission on cotton

1200. DR. MAM. RAMASWAMY: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a)whether Government are implementing the Mini Mission-ll of the Technology Mission on cotton in some States;

(b)if so, the details thereof;

(c)whether the objectives of the above scheme has been achieved;

(d)if so, the details thereof;

(e)if not, the reasons therefor; and

(f) the steps taken by Government to further assist the cotton farmers in suicide prone areas?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA): (a) to (f) Technology Mission on Cotton, a. Centrally Sponsored Scheme, is under implementation in the States of Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Haryana, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Orissa, Punjab Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Tripura, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal.

There has been a substantial increase in production and productivity of cotton since the start of the scheme in 2000-01. Production has increased from 95.24 lakh bales in 2000-01 to 209.64 lakh bales in 2006-07 with the yield increase from 190 kg lint per hectare to 389 kg lint per hectare in the corresponding period.

The Government has approved a special package to mitigate the distress of farmers in 31 suicide prone districts in the State of **Maharashtra,** Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Kerala. It aims at establishing **a** sustainable and viable farming and livelihood support system through debt relief to farmers, improved supply of institutional credit, ex-gratia assistance, crop centric approach to agriculture, assured irrigation facilities, watershed management, better extension and farming support services, and subsidiary income opportunities through horticulture, livestock, dairying, fisheries etc. Distribution on seeds, including cotton seeds, at subsidized rate is one of the components of the package.

Problems of farmers and landless workers due to Hailstorm in Bundelkhand

1201. SHRI PRAVEEN RASHTRAPAL: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the problem faced by farmers and landless workers on account of hailstorm during second week of February, 2007 in Bundelkhand region of Uttar Pradesh;

(b) the assistance being provided to the affected farmers and landless workers; and

(c) whether Bundelkhand areas was also affected on account of drought?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA): (a) to (c) The Government of Uttar Pradesh have informed that, due to hailstorm in the second week of February, 2007, farmers and landless workers faced crop damage in Banda, Mahoba, Hamirpur, Chitrakut, Jhansi, Lalitpurand Jalaun districts.

As per existing items and norms of expenditure for assistance from relief funds *i.e.* Calamity Relief Fund (CRF) and National Calamity Contingency Fund (NCCF) in the wake of natural calamities including hailstorm, assistance towards agriculture input subsidy is admissible to small and marginal farmers where crop loss on account of natural calamities is 50% and above, @ Rs. 1000/- per hectare for rainfed areas, Rs. 2500/-per hectage for irrigated areas and Rs. 4000/-per hectare for perennial crops. As per the existing norms, input subsidy is also admissible to farmers, other than small & marginal farmers, incase of severe calamity